Supporting Pupils with a Hearing Loss



Outcomes

- To develop an understanding of deafness and the impact of this in an educational setting

- To find out about the range of technology used to support pupils

- To have an understanding of key strategies to support pupils with a hearing loss in your class



Teacher of Deaf Children

- All children identified with a permanent hearing loss are referred to a sensory support service.
- The local offer outlines support available to these pupils in their local authority and how to access it
- In Warwickshire all children who are aided will have a Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People.
- Level of support is determined by the National Sensory Impairment Partnership criteria known as NatSIP.

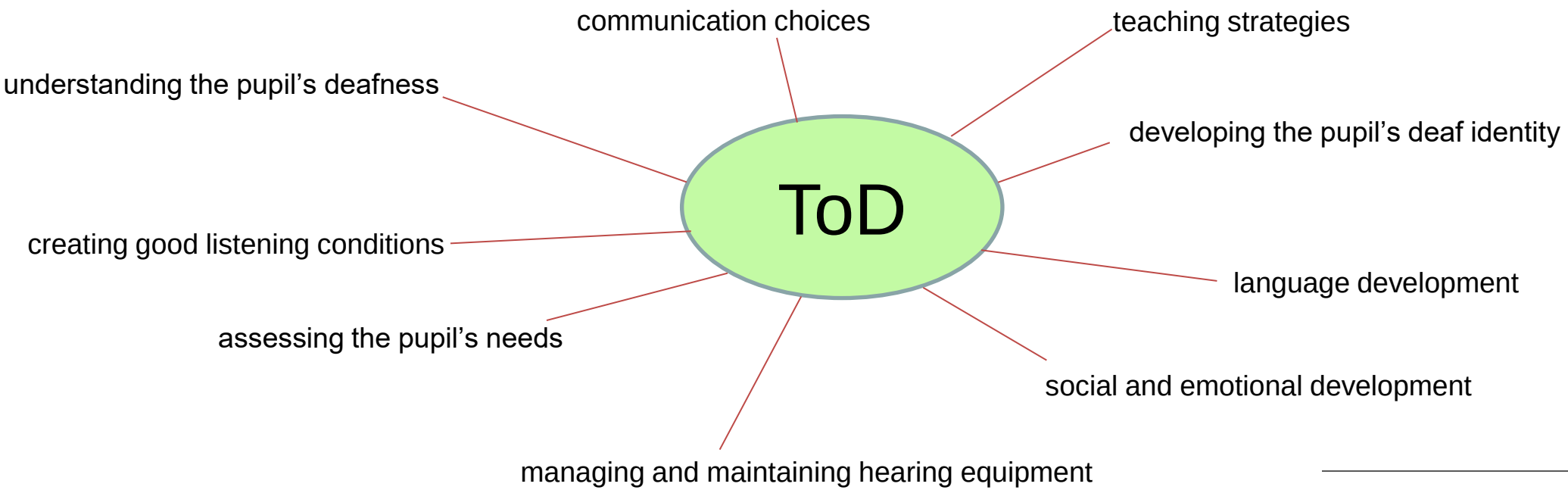
OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Role of the Teacher of Deaf Children and Young People

All ToDs are qualified teachers who have achieved additional postgraduate qualifications.

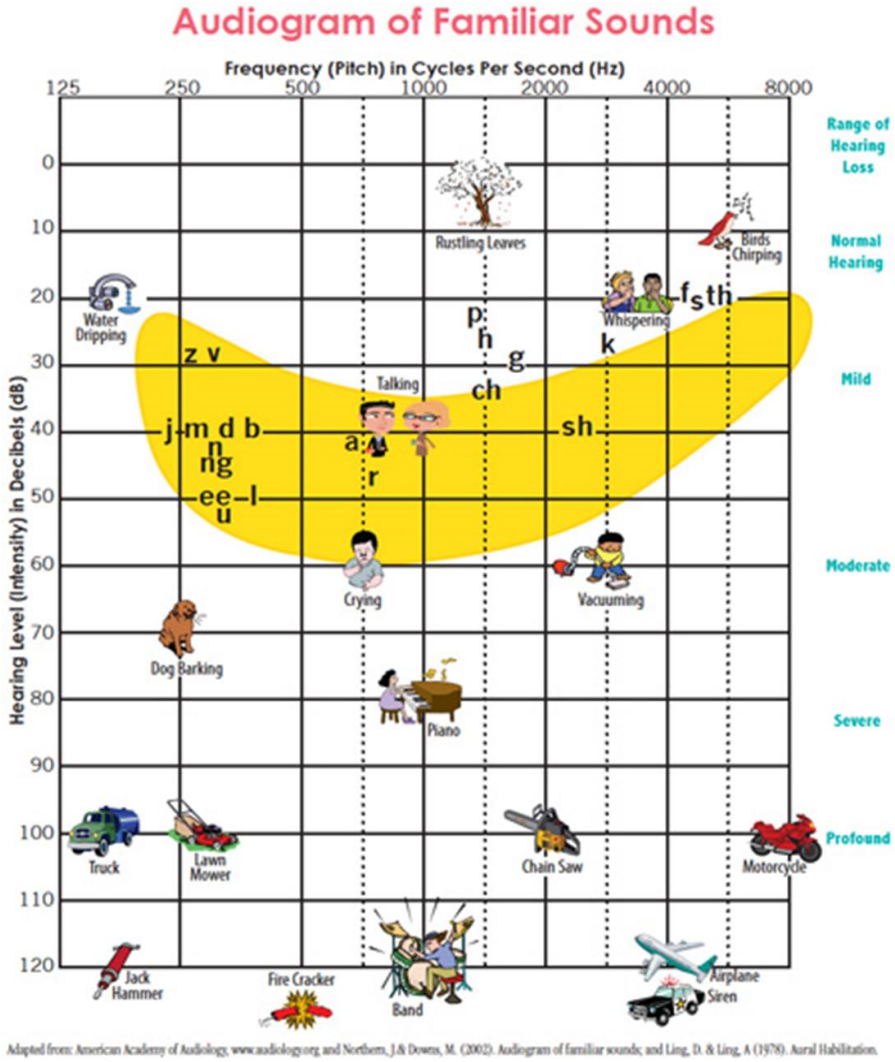
Deafness is not a learning disability. With the correct support pupils can achieve the same outcomes as hearing peers with the same cognitive ability.

ToDs can support and advise you with…



OFFICIAL - Sensitive

It is important that pupils wear their hearing aids because…



Education Strategy 2024 - 2029

Best Start | SEND & Inclusion | Sufficiency & Admissions | Strong System

Hearing Loss Simulation



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Va1wrnsMve0

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Challenges

- Listening in background noise
- Changes of classroom/ teaching environments with varying acoustic qualities
- Accessing information from listening alone
- Multi-tasking
- Learning new vocabulary, particularly specialist subject vocabulary
- Joining in discussions/ group work
- Social interactions, making new friendships
- Accessing recorded audio materials or video clips
- The need/ desire to be more independent as pupil progresses through school
- Changes of teaching staff (teaching styles, expectations, ease of communication)

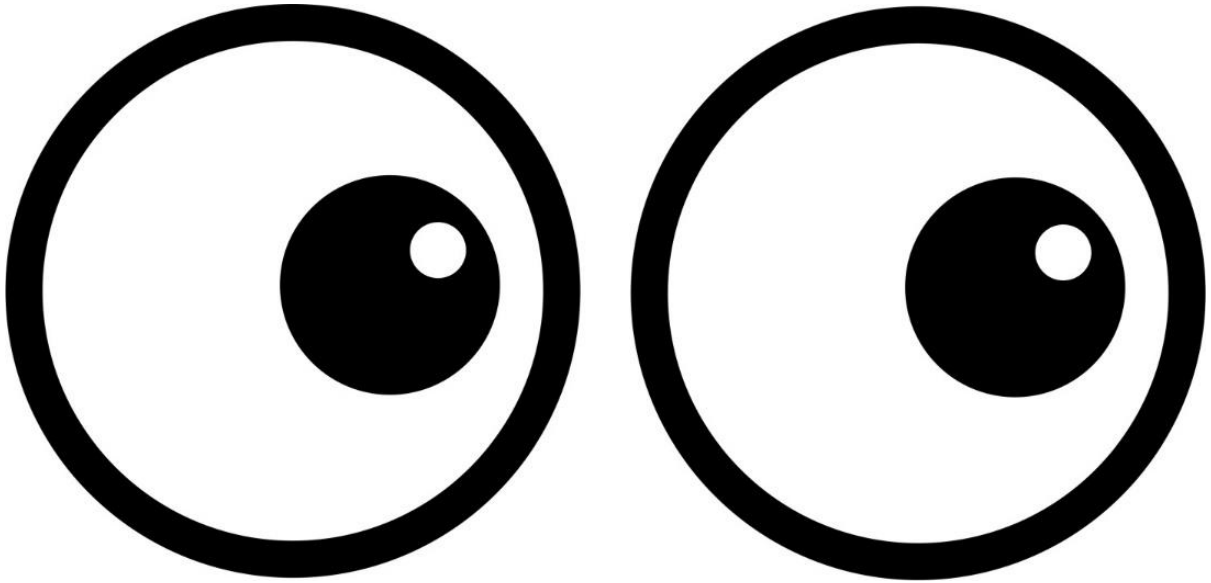
OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Cognitive Strain on the Brain



How hard do you have to try?

OFFICIAL - Sensitive



Look carefully at the words and read them aloud as they appear.

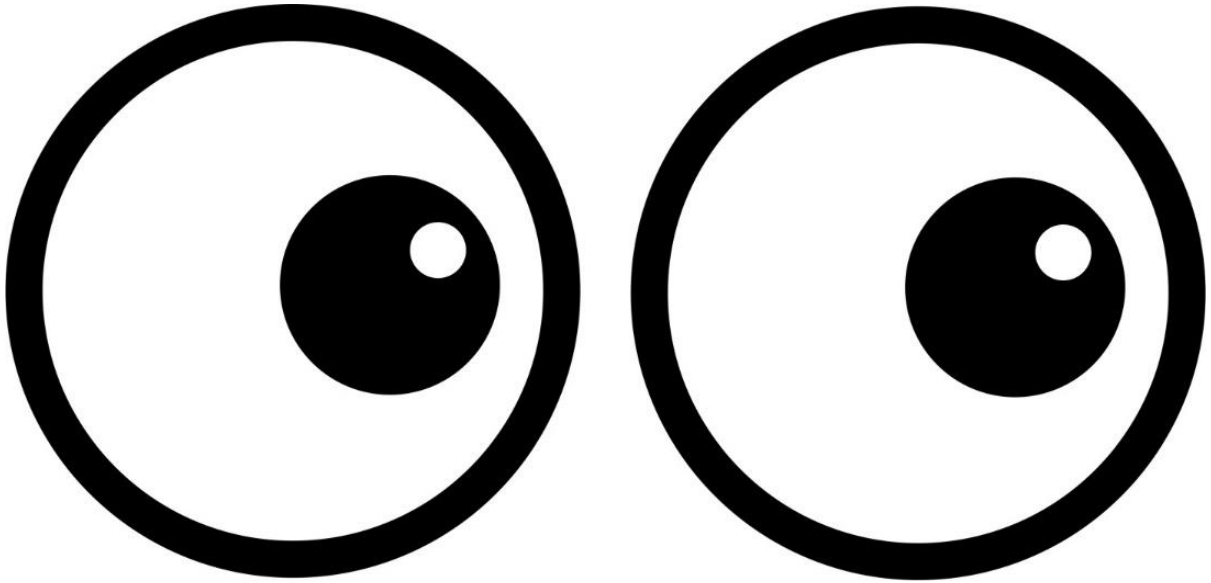
OFFICIAL - Sensitive

black red blue pink

green orange blue orange

purple red yellow black

OFFICIAL - Sensitive



Now, say the **colour** of each word as it appears.

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

red

red

green

yellow

orange

black

black

blue

pink

blue

pink

purple

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

This seemingly simple task helps to simulate how much harder your brain needs to work when extra effort is required.
This could be familiar to any pupils who use hearing technology and experience difficulty with language….and also when visual cues do not support instructions.
They are already likely to experience listening fatigue from the additional effort of listening through their hearing technology.
Also think about the added challenges in the classroom of background noise, distractions, teaching pace and poor acoustics.



OFFICIAL - Sensitive



[HeretoLearn SoundSimulation 2]

Good Communication Approaches

- Gain the pupil's attention before you start talking
- Speak clearly and at your normal pace and avoid shouting or whispering
- Your face should be clearly seen and use gesture and facial expression to support what you are saying
- Encourage pupils to speak one at a time and raise their hand before speaking
- Repeat the questions and contributions of other pupils
- Manage group work and discussions effectively
- Provide subtitles for videos/ DVDs
- Use captions for ppt presentations

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Checking Equipment

- Do you know what equipment the pupil uses?
- Can the pupil tell you if something is wrong?
- Do they know how to check that the equipment is working?
- Do they know how to troubleshoot or who to ask for help?

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Hearing aids

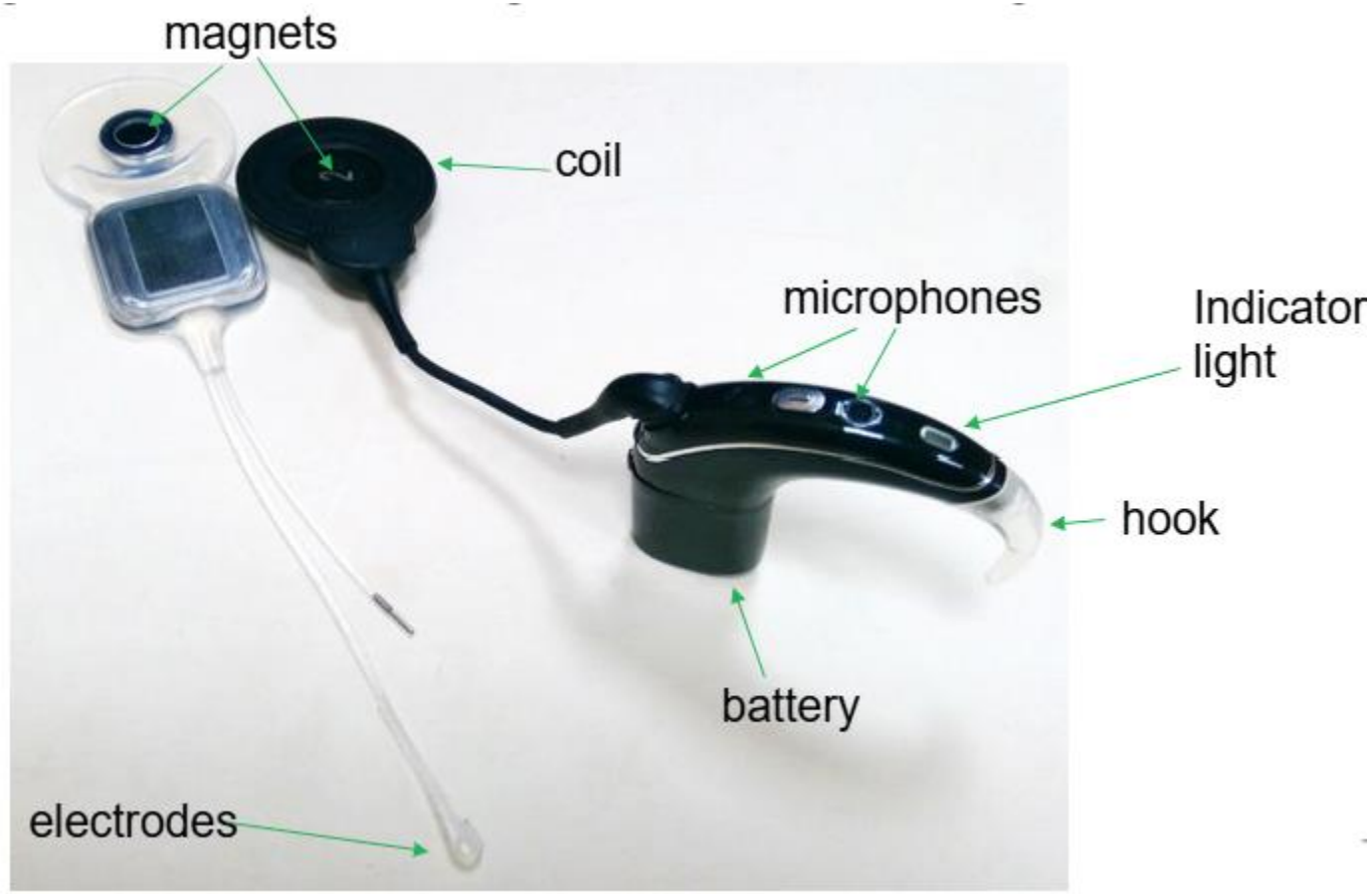
A hearing aid amplifies the sound and does not fix the problem



A hearing aid user has to 'work' at listening

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Cochlear Implants



Bone Conducting Aids



Image from www.OticonMedical.com



Image from www.microtiauk.org/bhm-tech/



Image from www.Malinka.me.uk





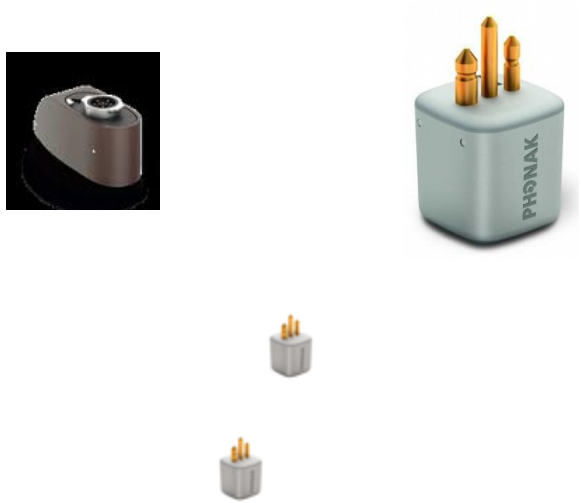
Radio Aids

Consist of two parts…

Transmitter worn by the teacher



Receivers – worn on, or integrated into, hearing aids



OFFICIAL - Sensitive

The radio aid is a device that connects to my speech processors and makes the speaker's voice louder

"Sometimes I can hear my teacher talking to someone outside the classroom"

"I would tell my teachers: when you're not talking to me mute or turn off"

"It's great for using when you're far from your teacher"

When there are lots of children next to my teacher and they are talking I can hear them through the radio aid, and it sounds echoey"

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Speech, Language & Communication Skills

The language and communication skills of deaf pupils may be delayed when compared to their hearing peers

- Match instructions to the level of understanding of the pupil
- Use objects, photos, illustrations, diagrams and graphs to support what is being said
- Pre teach new vocabulary/concepts
- Write new vocabulary/concepts on the board
- Allow for thinking time
- Check pupil's understanding using open questions
- Give pupils and any support staff copies of handouts and PowerPoint slides preferably before the lesson

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Social and Emotional Development

- Monitor deaf pupil's personal/ social functioning. The most challenging pragmatic hurdle for deaf pupils is mastering the art of holding a good conversation.
- Consider the environment - are there opportunities for successful and enjoyable collaborative learning and interaction, e.g. group work, lunch times
- Be prepared that some knowledge and skills in personal/ social functioning may need to be taught discretely, e.g. turn taking, good topic management, repairing communicative breakdowns.

OFFICIAL - Sensitive



- Present sounds in a visual way.
- Provide pupils with additional time and practise to process the sound system of the new language
- Use visual support
- Provide written and oral support for listening tasks
- Allow pupils to work in a quiet environment outside the classroom if the noise generated by group discussion in class makes listening too difficult
- Consider access arrangements for exams

OFFICIAL - Sensitive



- Provide additional support to help deaf pupils understand subject specific concepts and vocabulary
- Explain what you are going to do before pupils start any practical work
- Use visual aids, e.g. objects, word banks, annotated diagrams, instructions for practical lessons
- Safety goggles can be used but may be uncomfortable for cochlear implant users to wear
- Do not allow students with cochlear implants to use Van der Graaf Generators



- Where possible, use rooms with soft furnishings that do not have an echo or background noise
- If using recordings of music, check that the volume is at a comfortable level for pupils
- Give instructions before music is played.
- Provide written copies of lyrics and make them available before expecting the pupil to listen to the piece
- When students are learning about composition think about the environment.
- Consider use of hearing technology to give better access
- Consider access arrangements for exams

OFFICIAL - Sensitive



- Some pupils will choose not to wear their hearing technology during PE lessons.
- Hearing technologies are only splash proof not waterproof so should not be worn for long periods in the rain
- Hearing technology has an optimum range of 1-2 metres. Therefore, unless the student is using a radio aid, they will not be able to hear you clearly if they are more than 2 metres away from the speaker. Instructions should be given while the pupil is wearing their hearing aids and when they are within optimum range of the teacher.
- Teaching points, whenever possible, should take the form of demonstration
- Make use of visual clues e.g. flag as well as a whistle

OFFICIAL - Sensitive

Further Information

National Deaf Children's Society www.ndcs.org.uk

Videos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jylb7TDn2Tk
(supporting children with a mild hearing loss)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0AL84SjES4
(video produced by deaf pupils on the challenges they face and what you can do to help)

Resources

- Deaf friendly Teaching: For Primary School Staff
https://ndcs-bookshop.myshopify.com/products/deaf-friendly-teaching-for-primary-school-staff
-Deaf friendly Teaching for Secondary School Staff
https://cms.ndcs.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-07/Deaf-friendly%20secondary.pdf
-Deaf friendly Teaching for Staff in Special Schools
https://ndcs-bookshop.myshopify.com/products/deaf-friendly-teaching-for-staff-in-special-schools
-Teaching phonics to deaf children
https://www.ndcs.org.uk/documents-and-resources/teaching-phonics-to-deaf-children-guidance-for-teachers/
- Access Arrangements
https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/JCQ-AARA-2025_FINAL.pdf